New York Dec 1st 1842

Dear Friend,

Again and again, since I parted from you at Northampton, has it been in my heart to write to you; and if I have not done so, it has not been for want of grateful recollections of the many pleasant hours, and pure thoughts, and beautiful images, which I owe you; but in good truth, I live in perpetual hurry; and my friends will never know how many letters I write them, till some sort of epistonal daguerrotype is discovered, to take down thoughts as they rise. I will confess the plain truth, that I should not write to you now, if I had not business on hand, in which I need your assistance.

My heart is very full of a project, in which I need you as a kind of mediator. You know the painful tragedy of John C. Colt, and have doubtless heard of Caroline Henshaw, the woman to whom he was married a few hours before his death. Her history is this. She was an ignorant, worthy, affectionate German girl, apprentice to a corset-maker in Philadelphia. In some way, I know not how, she was about the premises, either as domestic or boarder, at the boarding house where John C. Colt was. ~~boarding~~. He befriended her in sickness, for she was poor and

I believe you would find the brother disposed to be honorable, and liberal. He is not a rich man, but a prosperous one. Oh here is a rare chance to teach the world a noble lesson! Will you forego the opportunity?

friendless. She became extremely attached to him, and when he came to N. York followed him, without his knowledge. Her strong affection awakened a kindred feeling in him; but judging like a man of the world, he thought it would not do to offend his genteel family by marrying her. They lived together without legal marriage, in a very secluded way, till the murder of Adams brought it all to light. She was then pregnant; and not long after gave birth to a son. Her love for Colt was of the strongest and most disinterested stamp; as is shown by her willingness to take his name under such awful circumstances. Mr. Colt's brother has been to see me, and consult with me about her. He says he believes her to be a modest, worthy girl; that she never formed any other connexion than that with his unfortunate brother; and that this had the palliation of most devoted love, and of friendless poverty. He say he feels it a duty to do more for her than feed and clothe her; that he ought, as far as possible, to throw a protecting influence around her and the child, ~~which~~ whom he shall in all respects treat as if he were his own son. "I want to educate her," says he; "to put her under influences that will

Write to me soon, directed to 143 Nassau St. care of Isaac T. Hopper. Oh, *how* disappointed I shall feel if you say me nay. Mr. Page is very earnest, too, that you should do it.

make her a *judicious* mother for my brother's son. But where shall I find a suitable place? I have thought of a country clergyman's family; but she would be pointed at in a country village, and she would have little chance to improve intellectually; and in most cases there would not be that entire forgetfulness of her peculiar situation, which is desirable." I at once thought of the West Roxbury Community, and mentioned it; at the same time telling him that you were so much crowded, that I thought it not very likely you could take her. I had *other* fears than those of your being crowded. I thought you might perhaps fear the "speech of people."

But, my dear friend, this is a real case of a fellow creature fallen among thieves, wounded and bleeding by the wayside. If she were a loose woman, I would be the last to propose such a thing. But I think she is not. She is, as I believe, an honest confiding young creature, the victim of a false state of society. She is almost heart-broken, and longs for seclusion, soothing influences, and instruction how to do her duty. If you, with your large and liberal views, and your clear perception of human brotherhood, if *you*, at West Roxbury, reject her, where, in the name of our common Father, *can* I find a shelter for her poor storm-pelted heart? And the family of Colt, is it not *noble* in them to

I wish I could say more. If I could *talk* with you, I believe I should so hang about the roots of your hearts, that you — *would* not refuse me. This poor young creature *must* be saved.

Y^rs^ most truly, L. M. Child.

Write to me soon, directed to 143 Nassau St. care of Isaac T. Hopper. Oh, how wish to deal thus with a poor ignorant German peasant? And will you throw them back on the worldly, the selfish, and the bigotted, and thus repress the noble impulse? Is it not enough to say to cavillers, "She wants to learn to be good, and who should help her, if we would not? These men desire to do a noble deed, and we dare not take the guilt of crushing their kindly feelings." My soul is on its knees before you, to receive this poor shorn lamb of our Father's flock. I am in agony, lest you should not listen to my supplications; for somehow or other, though a stranger to me, God has laid her upon my heart.

Mr. Colt seemed to leave the arrangements to me; but I thought his idea was to have her board with you for a year, doing what she conveniently could, consistently with the care of her child, and you to make such deductions from the price of board as her labors were worth; and if you found her a useful and pleasant inmate, to make such after arrangements about the education of the child, &c as should seem proper.

Paid Ripley + forwarde

PAID

NEW YORK DEC 2

John S. Dwight.
Brook Farm. West Roxbury,
Mass'ts.

To be opened by Mr. Ripley, in case of Mr. Dwight's absence.

Lydia Maria Child
Dec. 1. 1842.
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Ms. E.4.1

finds the brother dishonored to be honorable and liberal. He is